

The national poverty rate rose, for the second straight year, to 12.1 percent in 2002, from 11.7 percent the year before. In 2002, the national poverty rate for African Americans was 22.7 percent.

In 1999, median income for African Americans was \$31,778, compared to \$51,244, for the median income of white families. According to one report, in 1995, average white households had \$18,000 in financial wealth, while African-American households possessed a total of only \$200.

These statistics show the depth of racial inequality in America. In addition to economic disparities, the incarceration rate of African Americans, especially African-American males, is deeply disturbing.

Today, black men make up 41 percent of the inmates in Federal, State, and local prisons, but black men are only 4 percent of all students in American institutions of higher education, according to the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, autumn 2003.

According to a recent study, while African Americans are 13 percent of the population of my home State of New Jersey, they represent a staggering 63 percent of New Jersey's 27,891 State prisoners in 2002.

About 10 percent of all black men between 25 and 29 were incarcerated in 2002, compared with 1.2 percent of white men and 2.4 percent of Hispanic men.

Not only are African Americans imprisoned in disproportionately high numbers, they are disproportionately the victims of crimes, as well. In New Jersey, out of 341 total homicides by guns in 2002, 138 of those victims were African American. In 2000, more than 6,200 African Americans were killed by guns. In the 15 to 24 age group, firearm homicides were responsible for more than 86 percent of homicides suffered by African Americans. In the next age group up, 25 to 34, firearm homicides were more than 81 percent of homicides. In both cases firearm homicides were the number one cause of death for African Americans. The homicide victim rate for African Americans, 20.5 per 100,000 persons, is over six times that of whites, 3.3 per 100,000 persons.

I highlight these statistics about our Nation and my home State because the problems confronting the African-American community are in New Jersey, and they are in every State. We all bear responsibility to acknowledge them, to confront them, to help remedy them.

There are no easy answers to the problems African Americans face, but as Theodore Roosevelt put it a century ago, "This country will not be a really good place for any of us to live in if it is not a really good place for all of us to live in." So while we take this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful accomplishments of African Americans through the ages, we should also rededicate ourselves to making America a really good place for all of us to live in.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, every February nationwide we celebrate the diverse and monumental contributions African Americans have made not only for the advancement of African Americans but for all people of our Nation.

This celebratory month was made possible by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, an African-American studies scholar, who proposed such a recognition as a way of preserving African-American history. In keeping with the spirit and vision of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, I would like to pay tribute to one courageous woman, Sojourner Truth, who lived and died in Battle Creek, MI, and who played a significant role in addressing injustice and inequality in America. Sojourner Truth was a leader in the abolitionist movement and a powerful voice in the women's suffrage movement, playing a pivotal role in ensuring the right of all women to vote. Sojourner Truth changed the course of history.

Sojourner Truth was unable to read or write, but she mesmerized others by her speeches addressing the inhumanity and immorality of slavery. In 1851, Sojourner delivered her famous "Ain't I a Woman?" speech at the Women's Convention in Akron, OH. She spoke from her heart about the most troubling issues of her time. Her words on that day in Ohio are a testament to Sojourner Truth's convictions and are a part of the great legacy she left for us all.

I am proud and the people of my State are proud to claim this legendary leader as our own. In September 1999, we honored Sojourner Truth with the dedication of the Sojourner Truth Memorial Monument, which was unveiled in Battle Creek, MI.

Sojourner Truth was a political and social activist who personally conversed with President Abraham Lincoln on behalf of freed, unemployed slaves, and campaigned for Ulysses S. Grant in the Presidential election in 1868. Sojourner was a woman of great passion and determination who was spiritually motivated to preach and teach in ways that have had a profound and lasting imprint on American history.

Sojourner Truth was born Isabella Baumfree in 1797 in Ulster County, NY, and served as a slave under several different masters. She bore four children who survived infancy, and all except one daughter were sold into slavery. Baumfree became a freed slave in 1828 when New York State outlawed slavery. She remained in New York and instituted successful legal proceedings to secure the return of her son, Peter, who had been illegally sold to a slave-owner from Alabama.

In 1843, Baumfree changed her name to Sojourner Truth and dedicated her life to traveling and lecturing. She began her migration west in 1850, where she shared the stage with other abolitionist leaders such as Frederick Douglass. In October 1856, Truth came to Battle Creek, MI, with Quaker leader Henry Willis to speak at a Friends of Human Progress meeting. She eventually bought a house and settled in the area. Her antislavery, women's rights, and temperance arguments brought Battle Creek both regional and national recognition. Sojourner Truth

died at her home in Battle Creek, November 26, 1883, having lived quite an extraordinary life.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the Sojourner Truth "Ain't I a Woman" speech be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AIN'T I A WOMAN?

(By Sojourner Truth)

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about?

That man over there says women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or gets me any best place!

And Ain't I a Woman?

Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me!

And Ain't I a Woman?

I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well!

And Ain't I a Woman?

I have borne five children and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with a mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me.

And Ain't I a Woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? (member of the audience whispers 'intellect') That's it, honey.

What's that got to do with women's right or negroes' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and your holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, cause Christ wasn't a woman?

Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't got nothing more to say.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, it has been nearly 2½ years since a monstrous act of war was committed against the United States. The American people responded to the attacks of September 11 with courage—courage that was evident that horrible day in the heroic actions of the passengers on Flight 93, in the firefighters and police officers at Ground Zero, and in the Pentagon employees who led their co-workers to safety through fire, smoke, and rubble.

That courage is evident today in the men and women of our Armed Forces on the front lines in the war on terrorism and in the ordinary Americans

across the country who carry on normal, productive lives, refusing to be terrorized by terrorism.

President Bush and Congress responded by recognizing that this was a different kind of war with a different kind of enemy. Together we saw that this enemy used as a weapon the freedom and openness that Americans cherish but that it despises. We realized that our efforts to defend our Nation against this unconventional and unprincipled enemy were hampered by the lack of a unified strategy. To revisit a phrase used so often in the aftermath of September 11, we were not connecting the dots. We knew that turf battles, communication gaps, and interagency rivalries could no longer be tolerated. The stakes were too high.

The Department of Homeland Security is perhaps the most significant manifestation of the efforts undertaken by the President and Congress to create that unified strategy, to connect those dots, to coordinate this urgent new mission. The Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, which I chair, played a key role in creating the department and is helping it to succeed.

My committee swiftly confirmed eight talented and dedicated individuals to lead the department, including Secretary Ridge himself. We have held hearings and investigations on a wide range of homeland security issues, from the President's plan to better coordinate intelligence analysis and sharing, to unraveling the tangled web of international terrorism financing, to protecting American agriculture from sabotage, to securing our seaports. We have approved bills to reform the department's multi-billion dollar State grant program, to provide cutting edge technology to first responders, to help the department attract talented individuals with sought-after skills, and to ensure accountability within DHS's financial system.

Now the department is 1 year old. And in the span of just 1 year, the Department of Homeland Security, under the leadership of Secretary Tom Ridge, has made significant, even remarkable, progress.

The melding of 22 Federal agencies and 180,000 employees has occurred with some of the resistance we all expected but without the widespread turf battles many predicted. The level of cooperation and coordination within this new department, though not perfect, is a vast improvement over the previous, ad hoc structure. The initial focus upon airport security has been expanded to include other vulnerabilities, such as seaport and border security. The department has distributed billions of dollars to our first responders—the local and State emergency personnel on the front lines—for the equipment, training and guidance to carry out their vital missions. And we will continue to work with Secretary Ridge to ensure that a steady stream of funding is available for those efforts.

Of course, challenges lie ahead for this new agency, for the President and for this Congress. As we change, so does our enemy. As we address vulnerabilities, he seeks out new ones to exploit. As we move to protect our most high-profile targets in our major cities, we must always be aware that our small cities, towns and countryside are at risk as well. As we improve security at our borders, we must strive to keep them open to friendship and to commerce. As we defend our Nation against future attacks, we must never sacrifice the liberty that makes our Nation so worthy of being defended.

In an address given February 23 before the Homeland Security Institute, Secretary Ridge offered a first anniversary assessment of his department's accomplishments. He charted an ambitious but necessary course for its second year, and he described his vision for the years ahead.

Secretary Ridge pledge that the department will pursue the development of new technologies to combat terrorism. Analysis tools and detection equipment are keys to thwarting nuclear, chemical and biological attacks before they occur. We must, as he said, button up our lab coats and push the scientific envelope by forging new partnerships among government, the private sector, national laboratories and university research centers.

The Secretary pledged to strengthen information sharing among the public and private sectors and to create standards for communications and equipment. "Interoperability" is a cumbersome word, but it is one we all should add to our vocabularies. Only by improving communications and ensuring that equipment works across jurisdictions will our front-line defenders and our first responders be able to better detect attacks and to coordinate their efforts during an emergency.

Secretary Ridge pledged to integrate our port and border security systems in a way that does not impede the flow of trade and travel across our borders, a critical goal for border States like Maine. The department's first year produced much progress: screeners, air marshals and state-of-the-art technology have made air travel safer. Traffic through our ports and our borders, which nearly ground to a halt after the attacks, is moving with speed, efficiency and greater security: more than 500 million people, 130 million motor vehicles, and millions more railcars and containers are processed at our borders every year. At the same time, container inspection has been expanded from our own shores to 16 key overseas ports.

Borders will always be a point of vulnerability for any free society. In partnership with the private sector and our international allies, we can reduce that vulnerability without unduly impeding the flow of legitimate commerce.

The Committee on Governmental Affairs stands ready to assist the Department as it begins its second year. We

will continue to provide the department with the authority it needs to protect our Nation, and we will continue our aggressive oversight of its programs and activities. At times, we may disagree with the department, but our goal is always to improve the department and to recognize the extraordinary progress made by Secretary Ridge and Deputy Security Loy, their talented leadership team, and the dedicated men and women in the department who work each and every day to strengthen our security.

PRYOR RECESS APPOINTMENT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, during the Presidents Day break in the Senate session, President Bush chose to act unilaterally to appoint William Pryor to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Over the past few weeks, I have shared with the Senate three other divisive developments regarding judicial nominations: The Pickering recess appointment, the renomination of Claude Allen, and the theft of Democratic computer files by Republican staff. In spite of all those affronts, Senate Democrats cooperated in confirming two additional judicial nominees this year and continue to participate in hearings for judicial nominees. We have done so without the kinds of delays and obstruction that Republicans relied upon to stall more than 60 of President Clinton's judicial nominees.

Today, I report upon the President's appointment of William Pryor in what the Democratic leader has properly termed an abuse of power. It was an abuse of the limited constitutional authority of the executive to make necessary recess appointments only when the Senate is unavailable. This is unprecedented.

Actions like this show the American people that this White House will stop at nothing to try to turn the independent Federal judiciary into an arm of the Republican Party. Doing this further erodes the White House's credibility and the respect that the American people have for the courts.

This is an administration that promised to unite the American people but that has chosen time and again to act in ways that divides us, to disrespect the Senate and our representative democracy. This is an administration that squandered the goodwill and good faith that Democrats showed in the aftermath of September 11, 2001.

This is an administration that refused to acknowledge the strides we made in filling 100 judicial vacancies under Democratic Senate leadership during 17 difficult months in 2001 and 2002, while overcoming the September 11 attacks, the subsequent anthrax attacks and in spite of Republican mistreatment of scores of qualified, moderate judicial nominees of President Clinton.

This is an administration that has once again demonstrated its